

# Dimensions of Effective Teaching

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**Abstract** - In the words of A.P. J. Abdul Kalam, teachers have a great mission to ignite the minds of the young. The ignited minds of the young are the most powerful resources on the earth, above the earth and under the earth. The role of the teacher is like the proverbial 'ladder' – it is used by everyone to climb up in life-but the ladder itself stays in its place. Teachers have remarkable duty in shaping the life of a person. The aim of the teacher should be to construct personality and instill values that develop the learning capacity of children. The teacher builds confidence in the students to be creative and creative which in turn will make them competitive to face the future. As in the belief of Kalam, there is no other profession in the world that is more important to society than that of a teacher. This powerful truth about the teachers reflects the significance of teaching and in particular effective teaching. This paper will discuss some points related to the idea of effective teaching.

**Index Terms** - Effective teaching, teaching competency, teaching skills.

## 1.1INTRODUCTION

The origin of the concept of the 'effective teaching' started long way back in the 1960s. The conceptions of effective teaching were more on what teachers did in the classroom.

At present the theories about 'effective teaching' are more connected to the understanding of how learners learn. Now effective teaching has been accepted as 'teachers facilitating learning' rather than 'teachers being a source of all knowledge in the classroom' (Killen, 2013).

Shadreck and Isaac (2012) define 'effective teaching' as the ability to be useful, supportive, and valuable in assisting learning.

Petty (2009) states that 'effective teaching' methods allow teachers to do less, and the learners to do more by actively participating in their learning activities.

Vogt (1984) related 'effective teaching' to the ability to provide instruction to different students of different

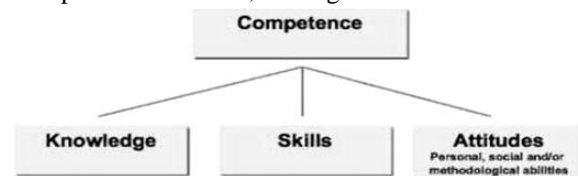
abilities while incorporating instructional objectives and assessing the effective learning mode of the students.

## 1.2 Teaching Competence and Skills

### 1.2.1 Teaching Competence: Meaning and Nature Competence:

'Competence' means.,

- excellent capability
- knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences
- ability to perform or carry out defined tasks in particular context, at a high level of excellence



Competence is not a simple addition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is the proven ability to use them in a context to achieve results!

Teaching Competence:

Teaching competency is the ability of the teacher in performing the teaching task with a high level of excellence. Teaching Competence can be classified into four types:

- Competence of Subject matter
- Competence of Teaching Skills
- Competence of Teaching Behaviour
- Competence of Problem Solving

All these four types of competence together contribute to the teaching competence of a teacher. These four competences are related to the content and instructional methods.

### 1.3 Categorization of Teacher's Competences

- Special Professional Competence
- General Educational Competence
- Didactic and Psycho-didactic Competence
- Diagnostic and Interventional Competence

- Social, Psychosocial and Communicative Competence
- Managerial and Normative Competence
- Professional and Personality Cultivating Competence

#### 1.4 Nature of Teaching Competence

- Teaching Competence is composite in nature
- Teaching Competence is personalized
- Teaching Competence is dynamic in nature
- Teaching Competence can be developed
- Teaching Competence is not static in nature

#### 1.5 Teaching Skills

“Teaching is the arrangement of contingencies of reinforcement under which students learn.” (B.F. Skinner, 1968)

1. A teaching skill is that behavior of the teacher which facilitates pupils’ learning directly or indirectly.
2. A teaching skill includes all arts and behavior of the teacher which maximizes pupils’ learning.
3. A teaching skill is that art of the teacher which makes communication between the teacher and pupils sufficiently.

##### 1.5.1 Allen and Ryan listed the following Teaching Skills at Stanford University in the U.S.A.

1. Stimulus Variation
2. Set induction
3. Closure
4. Teacher silence and non-verbal cues
5. Reinforcing pupil participation
6. Fluency in questioning
7. Probing questioning
8. Use of higher questions
9. Divergent questions
10. Recognizing and attending behavior
11. Illustrating and use of examples
12. Lecturing
13. Planned repetition
14. Completeness of communication

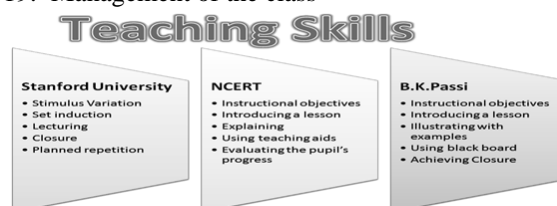
##### 1.5.2 B.K. Passi has given the following list of Teaching Skills in his book “Becoming Better Teacher; Micro-teaching Approach”:

1. Writing instructional objectives
2. Introducing a lesson

3. Fluency in questioning
4. Probing questioning
5. Explaining
6. Illustrating with examples
7. Stimulus variation
8. Silence and non-verbal cues
9. Reinforcement
10. Increasing pupil participation
11. Using black board
12. Achieving Closure
13. Recognizing attending behavior

##### 1.5.3 NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) in its publication Core Teaching Skills (1982) has laid stress on the following teaching skills:

1. Writing instructional objectives
2. Organizing the content
3. Creating set for introducing the lesson
4. Introducing a lesson
5. Structuring classroom questions
6. Question delivery and its distribution
7. Response management
8. Explaining
9. Illustrating with examples
10. Using teaching aids
11. Stimulus variation
12. Pacing of the lesson
13. Promoting pupil participation
14. Use of blackboard
15. Achieving closure of the lesson
16. Giving assignments
17. Evaluating the pupil’s progress
18. Diagnosing pupil learning difficulties and taking remedial measures
19. Management of the class



#### 1.6 Classification of Teaching Skills

Teaching Skills can be classified as follows:

1. Core Teaching Skills
2. Specific Teaching Skills
3. Target Group Specific Teaching Skills

### 1.6.1 Core Teaching Skills

Teaching Skills are composite in nature. In general there is a set of teaching skills which cuts across the subject areas has been identified. These skills are foundational and essential for all the teachers. These are known as Core Teaching Skills. The following diagram illustrates the elements of core teaching skills.



Core Teaching Skills are:

1. Skill of Introducing a lesson
2. Skill of Explaining
3. Skill of Illustrating with Examples
4. Skill of Probing Questions
5. Skill of Stimulus Variation
6. Skill of Reinforcement
7. Skill of Using Blackboard
8. Skill of Classroom Management

#### 1.6.1.1 Core Teaching Skills and their Components

Core Skill	Components
Probing questions	Prompting, seeking further information, redirection, focusing, increasing critical awareness.
Explaining	Clarity, continuity, relevance to content using beginning and concluding statements, covering essential points.
Illustrating with examples	Simple, relevant and interesting examples appropriate media, use of inductive deductive approach.
Stimulus variation	Body movements, gestures, change in speech pattern, change in interaction style, pausing, focusing, oral-visual switching.
Reinforcement	Use of praise words and statements, accepting and using pupils' idea, repeating and rephrasing, extra vertical

	cues, use of pleasant and approving gestures and expressions, writing pupils' answer on the black board.
Classroom Management	Call pupils by names, Make norms of classroom behaviour, attending behaviour reinforced, clarity of direction, check non-attending behaviour, keep pupils in Eye Span, check inappropriate behaviour immediately.
Use of blackboard	Legible, neat and adequate with reference to content covered.

### 1.6.2 Specific Teaching Skills

In addition to the core skills the teachers should possess certain specific skills also. For different purposes in teaching, some special skills are used. An organization of specific teaching skills is needed to make selection of the appropriate teaching behaviors to be used in the today teaching.

The specific Teaching skills are as follows:

1. Skill of writing instructional objectives.
2. Skill of sequencing and organizing knowledge to be presented to achieve specific objectives
3. Skill of fluency in questioning.
4. Skill of silence and non-verbal ones.
5. Skill of increasing pupil participation.
6. Skill of achieving closure.
7. Skill of recognizing attending behaviour.
8. Skill of Experimentation.
9. Skill of diagnosing difficulties of students related to subject matter.
10. Skill of using the teaching aids.
11. Skill of maintaining the science laboratory.
12. Skill of giving assignment.
13. Skill of developing critical and independent thinking among the students.
14. Skill of maintaining Discipline.
15. Skill of pacing the lesson.

### 1.6.3 Target Group Specific Teaching Skills

All the learners are not similar. The teacher has to address a variety of students as their target of teaching process. The target groups that a teacher deals with are:

- Children
- Adults
- Students with special needs (mentally and physically challenged).

Even among the students there are individual differences. There are students with different levels of ability. They are

- Average Students
- Above Average Students
- Gifted Students
- Poor Students

In order to deal with these various target groups, the teacher is to possess specific skills known as “target group specific teaching skills”.

### 1.7 Dimensions of Effective Teaching

Effective Teaching has got various dimensions like Competency, Commitment, Performance Area etc. the first dimension called Competency itself is a composite ability. It includes knowledge of the subject matter, teaching skills, attitude, problem solving skills etc.

#### 1. Competency

Competency is the first dimension of effective of teaching.

‘Competency’ dimension of the effective teaching can be described as the ability to make students achieve in the three dimensions: cognitive, affective and psychomotor.

The students gain knowledge and understanding in the cognitive domain, attitudes, interests and appreciation etc in the affective domain., and psychomotor skills like handwriting, drawing etc. in the psychomotor domain.

Competency includes the mastery in subject of the teacher and the specific skills in delivering the content to the students. In order to deliver effective teaching, the teacher should have depth and breadth in their knowledge of the subject.

Competency is the positive mental attitude that the teacher is having towards the teaching process and to the students.

Competency also includes problem solving skills of the teacher in the classroom situation. It’s the ability to choose appropriate teaching method and proper teaching aids during instructional process.

#### 2. Commitment

Commitment is another criterion of teaching effectiveness.

‘Commitment’ is one of the personality attributes of a teacher. It is the solemn promise to perform the duties

and responsibilities prescribed by the laws and ethics of the teaching profession.

Commitment of the teacher is an essential criterion of teaching effectiveness. In fact this is the most important dimension of effective teaching since all other dimensions are the result of this factor.

For example, a teacher can gain Competency only if he/she is committed to gain knowledge and skills. Likewise, a teacher can perform well only if he/she is committed to teaching performance.

The indicators of commitment are:

- Confidence
- Professionalism
- Motivation
- Responsibility
- Positive attitude
- Sociability
- Sincerity
- Accountability
- Punctuality etc

#### 3. Performance Areas

This is the third dimension of effective teaching.

‘Performance’ indicates what the teacher does and what the students do. It means the interaction between the teacher and the students.

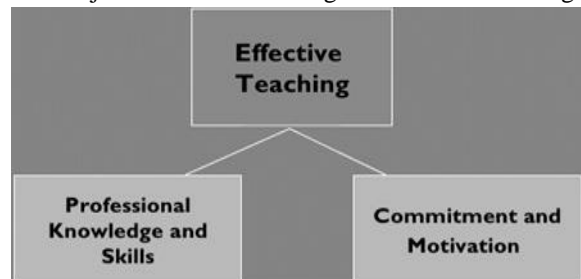
The teacher should possess certain performance skills for his/her effective teaching. The performance skills are:

- Skill of introducing, explaining, illustrating, questioning, reinforcing, initiating, evaluating etc
- The teacher’s performance is reflected in students’ behaviour and performance in the class. For example:
  - Students actively participate in the teaching learning process, asks questions, engage in discussion etc.
  - Teacher-students interaction is another performance area of effective teaching.
  - Exchange of ideas, healthy and warm reception of knowledge and mutual response are part of interaction.

### 1.8 Factors Contributing Effective Teaching

Clark (1993) wrote that “effective teacher involves someone who can increase student knowledge, but it goes beyond this in defining an effective teacher”.

The major factors contributing to Effective Teaching:



1. Professional knowledge and Skills:
  - Use effective strategies to promote students' motivation to learn
  - Communicate well with students and parents
  - Work effectively with students from culturally diverse backgrounds
  - Have good assessment skills
  - Integrate technology into the curriculum
  - Exhibit subject matter competence
  - Implement appropriate instructional strategies
  - Set high goals for themselves and students and plan for instruction
  - Create developmentally appropriate instructional materials and activities
  - Manage classrooms for optimal learning
2. Commitment and Motivation
  - Have a good attitude
  - Care about students
  - Invest time and effort
  - Bring a positive attitude and enthusiasm to the classroom

#### 1.9 Conclusion

There are several factors both major and minor that contribute to the 'effective teaching'.

A non exclusive list of such factors is given:

1. Sense of Humor
2. A Positive Attitude
3. High Expectations
4. Fairness
5. Flexible
6. Practical
7. Social

8. Goal oriented
9. Consider contextual realities
10. Committed to students and learning
11. Knows the subject matter
12. Responsible for managing students
13. Think systematically about their own practice
14. Member of the learning community- (Collins (1990)

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